

## 1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4

2 INTRODUCED BY BARTLETT

3  
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY THE USES OF AND THE NEEDS FOR  
6 HIGH-QUALITY AND TIMELY MINUTES OF COMMITTEES OF THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE; REQUESTING  
7 THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROPOSE A CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE COMPONENTS TO BE  
8 INCLUDED IN COMMITTEE MINUTES; REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL EXAMINE AND  
9 ASSESS THE EFFICIENCY AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF PRODUCING  
10 COMMITTEE MINUTES, INCLUDING THE APPLICATION OF AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY; AND REQUIRING  
11 A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY TO THE 55TH LEGISLATURE.

12  
13 WHEREAS, committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives are required by the Rules  
14 of the Montana Legislature to keep minutes of the meetings of their respective committees; and

15 WHEREAS, it is unclear what material is intended to be included as components of committee  
16 minutes; and

17 WHEREAS, the minutes of the committees are becoming increasingly important to the public, to  
18 public entities administering acts of the Legislature, and within the judicial system, thereby demanding ever  
19 higher guaranties of accuracy, completeness, useability, and timeliness; and

20 WHEREAS, the methods used by the Senate and the House of Representatives to produce minutes  
21 of committee meetings may have become technologically obsolete; and

22 WHEREAS, the demand for high-quality and timely minutes of committees may be exceeding the  
23 capacity of the Senate and the House of Representatives to produce the minutes unless the traditional  
24 methods are augmented by available technology; and

25 WHEREAS, the Senate and the House of Representatives invest a considerable amount of staff and  
26 financial resources in producing committee minutes by traditional methods; and

27 WHEREAS, employing technology as a tool in preparing high-quality and timely committee minutes  
28 may be a cost-effective approach in meeting the requirements of the Rules of the Montana Legislature and  
29 the needs of all persons who use minutes of committees of the Legislature.

30

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
2 STATE OF MONTANA:

3 That the Legislative Council be requested to conduct an interim study to examine:

4 (1) the needs of the Senate and the House of Representatives relative to the production and  
5 retention of high-quality and timely minutes of all committee meetings;

6 (2) the use of and need for high-quality and timely minutes of committee meetings within the legal  
7 community, by state agencies, and, if necessary, among other users of the minutes;

8 (3) the archival requirements of minutes of committee meetings;

9 (4) methods used in other states in preparing high-quality and timely minutes of legislative  
10 committee meetings;

11 (5) alternative means and technologies that might be used in Montana to produce minutes of  
12 committees; and

13 (6) the archival qualities, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the various alternative means and  
14 technologies available for producing minutes of committees.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that based on its examination of the need for and the uses of  
16 committee minutes, the Legislative Council propose a clear definition of the components to be included in  
17 committee minutes.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in conducting the study, the Legislative Council rely upon the  
19 experience and the expertise of the members of the respective Legislative Administration Committees of  
20 the Senate and the House of Representatives for advice.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in conducting the study, the Legislative Council rely upon the  
22 experience and the expertise of the Legislative Council Librarian, the State Librarian, the State Law  
23 Librarian, the State Archivist, current and former Secretaries of the Senate and Chief Clerks of the House  
24 of Representatives, persons knowledgeable about available technology pertinent to the study, and others  
25 who may be affected by the form, content, use, timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of minutes of  
26 Legislative committees.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislative Council report its findings, conclusions, and options  
28 for legislative consideration to the 55th Legislature.

29 -END-

APPROVED BY COMM.  
ON LEG. ADMIN.

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